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Congress Golden Jubilee Brochure No. 8

DEFENCE OF INDIA

OR

Nationalization of Indian Army

BY

NIRAD C. CHAUDHURY

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SWARAJ BHAWAN,
ALLAHABAD.
December 15, 1935.

J. B. KRIPALANI,
General Secretary,
ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

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DEFENCE OF INDIA

THE Problem of Nationalization

I.—THE PROBLEM STATED

The National Demand

The general public has been kept familiar with the problem of Indianizing the army mainly through the discussion of three concrete proposals. The first of these is to make the commissioned ranks of the army Indian, the second to replace the British regiments in India by purely Indian units, and the third to transfer the control of army affairs to an Indian minister. Of these the first is by far the oldest demand, for it was first discussed as a practical proposition in 1885. From that date till 1914, public opinion generally and the Indian National Congress in particular repeatedly insisted on the change, without however any result. Then came the war and with it an immense strengthening of the Indian case through India's whole-hearted co-operation with Great Britain and the fine record of Indian soldiers. As a result, the Government introduced the principle of Indianization just after the war, and some qualified Indians were given commissions in the army. This was followed by a more

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systematic scheme to Indianize eight selected units of the Indian army, and in course of the next few years the principle has been further amplified by the adoption of a wider scheme and the creation of a military college in India.

By this time, however, the public expectation has wholly outstripped the hesitating concessions. What Indian opinion now wants is a rapid and complete substitution of the British officers of the army by trained Indians, while the military authorities not only believe this to be impracticable but also look upon the scheme of Indianization now being worked out as tentative and experimental. The divergence between the two points of view is thus fundamental, and if the highest military authorities are to be believed, there is no likelihood of the pace of Indianization being quickened in the near future.

Nor have the nationalist efforts been more successful over the other two proposals. The idea of entrusting the defence of India to an Indian minister and of eliminating the British regiments is of course a logical corollary to the transfer of leadership to Indians. It is only by the simultaneous adoption of all these steps that the process of Indianization can be completed. But so far there is not the least sign of the experiment being tried. All that Indian politicians have been able to do about the last two items is to put formal resolutions before the Government, without, however, being able to secure even the recognition of the principle.

But whatever the success of these attempts, there is at least no doubt about their intention. What nationalist

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opinion seeks to do about the army is not simply to open up for Indians careers now closed to them, nor even to bring about a reform in matters of detail. Both these are desirable ends but the real object is far more comprehensive. The Indian National Congress wants to transform the whole of the defence service of India from its present to a national footing as one of the indispensable conditions and the natural fulfilment of the ideal of *Swaraj*. The right and capacity of defence is an integral part of self-government. Without it no scheme of local autonomy can be considered to be adequate. The people of India at present do not possess this right of defence, nor are their latent capacities in this respect being properly developed. This must be looked upon as one of the first conditions to be fulfilled if India is ever to become the master of her destiny.

Character of the Present Army

It is perhaps needless to explain that the nationalization of the defence of India will be neither an easy nor a light task. As now constituted, the armed forces under the Government of India are Indian in one sense only—in that their cost is borne by the people of India. In everything else they are either British or, at any rate, non-national, though an overwhelming proportion of their personnel is furnished by India. The main features of the non-national character of the Army in India may be summarized under the following heads:

1. It is not controlled by Indians, and the constitutional representatives of the people of India

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in the governmental machinery have no effective voice in its affairs.

2. It is recruited from certain parts of India only and not from the country as a whole. To be more particular, rather more than half of its personnel is furnished by the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province with parts of Kashmir, about a quarter by the hilly tracts of Garhwal, Kumaon and Nepal, and less than a quarter by certain regions of Rajputana, the U. P., Bombay, Madras and Burma. Provinces like Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa and the C. P., and large areas of Madras and Bombay do not furnish a single soldier to the army.

3. Even within the areas from which the army is normally recruited there is a strict regulation of the quotas to be furnished by each district, tribe, caste or sect. Any Punjabi Mussalman or Gurkha cannot claim to be freely admitted to the army simply because he happens to come from one of the two most numerous classes enlisted in the ranks. He must also belong to the specified district, tribe, clan or even *gotra*. In point of fact, the Punjabi Mussalmans in the army are preponderantly trans-Chenab and the Gurkhas, Magars and Gurungs.

4. Not only is the Indian army recruited from a limited number of carefully selected classes from certain specified regions, but its whole

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internal organization is based on a caste system more rigid than that of even Hindu society. The Indian army does not rocognize the individual. It is neatly grouped into battalions, companies, squadrons, and sometimes even platoons of specified classes according to a fixed ratio, and no one who does not belong to one of these classes is allowed to enter the army simply because he is individually fit. What is more important still, an individual of one class is not permitted to serve in a group allotted to another, and these groups are so arranged that they retain their tribal or communal loyalties and at the same time balance the characteristics and the influence of one another.

5. Indians in the army are kept more or less insulated from the rest of the population, or at least are not encouraged to mix freely with them. The result is mutual suspicion. The soldiers look upon the civil population as a class of inferior beings and the latter return the unfriendly feeling by regarding the soldiers as pampered and arrogant mercenaries.

6. The Army in India is partly constituted of units of the British Army, and till very recently Indians were not employed in all its arms. These two facts taken together made and still make it impossible for Indians in the army to fight a campaign by themselves alone. Ever since the Mutiny it had remained one of the fundamental principles of army organization

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in India that not only should Indians not be allowed to occupy positions of responsibility and power in the army, but that they should also never be taken into all its arms so that they might be able, by themselves alone, to constitute a self-contained fighting formation. This traditional policy has been partially abandoned as a result of the decision to give commissions to Indians, to raise a purely Indian regiment of artillery, and to Indianize one of the four divisions of the Field Army. But the transformation, such as it is, is being worked out with extreme caution. It will still take a long time to be accomplished, and even when completed will affect not more than one-twelfth of the total fighting strength of the Army in India. There is also no idea, as has already been said, of eliminating the purely British units of the army.

7. Even now and in spite of the decision to give commissions to Indians and to start a military college in India, the leadership of the army is to all intents and purposes purely British. The British officers in India are technically divided into two classes, those of British Service and those belonging to the Indian Army. For the practical purpose of command, however, there is no distinction between them, and they all belong to the close trade union of British officers of the entire British and Indian armed forces. Politically, these officers are

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imbued through and through with the ideals of British imperialism, and their military doctrine is that of the Imperial General Staff. This, of course, is both natural and desirable from the British point of view but it does not on that account make the Indian army more national.

8. Last of all, the function of the Army in India is not purely Indian. It is imperial and not national. Briefly, this means that the Army in India is maintained to uphold British economic and political interests in India and the East and that it may be used against Indians in the interest of British supremacy.

Spirit and Quality of the Army

These characteristics give to the Indian army of today certain qualities of its own. High military authorities are of opinion that as a fighting machine it would be able to stand up to any European army. This may be quite true. But at the same time it is well to remember that, in spite of its efficiency and the fighting quality of its Indian personnel, the Indian army stands in a class apart from the armies of modern civilized States. The most striking of these peculiarities is the absence in it of a national feeling and the patriotism which springs from it. This sense of a national mission has always been recognized as one of the most valuable moral assets of an army. It is, however, wholly absent in the Army in India. Its spirit is purely professional and it has to maintain the fighting quality of its Indian personnel by

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basing itself exclusively on either professional pride or hereditary and traditional aptitudes.

It follows from this that the Indian army cannot, like the best armies of modern times, be the expression of the highest military potentiality of the nation. Military energy after all is only a specialized and concentrated form of social energy, and the past history, the habits and traditions, as well as the cultural and political ideals of a people have as much to do with it as purely physical attributes. By its very nature the Indian army cannot draw upon all the elements of strength to be found in the different factors of national life. To that extent its morale is weak, and the British military authorities who are perfectly conscious of the fact try to compensate for the weakness by including purely British units in the fighting formations.

Another peculiarity of the existing army, which is equally conspicuous, is the absence in its Indian portion, due to lack of opportunities, training and education, of all capacity for leadership, organization and initiative on the highest military plane. As a modern fighting machine the Indian army would go to pieces if the British officers were removed from it. The presence of a small number of Indian officers in it has not made any difference in this respect felt as yet, and the role of the Indian element in the army may still be very justly compared to that of stone chips serving as filling in a reinforced concrete building, while the steel frame and nets which give the structure its shape and strength correspond to the British element. It is of course obvious that no other system is possible under the existing circumstances but, as even

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Sir Valentine Chirol admitted, the system "however well it works in practice for the production of a reliable fighting machine, was not calculated to train Indians to protect themselves."

Any thoroughgoing programme of Indianizing the army should alter all this. A national army for India should be commanded and controlled by Indians, be recruited from all parts of the country and be animated by a national spirit. It should be a self-contained fighting machine able to do without the help and guidance of foreigners and above all, it should foster the military capacity of the whole nation and be directly related to it. Admittedly this is a far-reaching programme, and British military authorities have never recognized even the remote possibility of its fulfilment. This, however, is hardly unexpected. The military profession is extremely conservative all the world over. Even in free and progressive countries it is non-receptive of new ideas, and in India the soldier's natural distrust of innovation has been immeasurably strengthened by racial and political prepossessions. Hence, an advocate of army reform in India is likely to be condemned by the military authorities as an unpractical visionary. But, as a British military writer has shrewdly observed, the military mind cannot make a disinction between having vision and being a visionary. If a solution to the problem of Indianizing the army is to be found at all, it will be found through vision, combined with a clear insight into the obstacles existing on our side as well as those likely to be created by extraneous circumstances.

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II.—FUNCTION

National And Imperial Function

Of all the aspects in which the Army in India might be made more truly national, function should be dealt with first, because it is vital not only for its own sake but also as a key to the rest of the problem. Every army exists for a definite purpose. It is this purpose which governs the principles of its organization, composition and equipment. If, therefore, an army is to be changed in any important respect, the very first question to ask should be whether there is anything inherent in its function which stands in the way.

Now, were this question to be put to an educated Indian about the existing army, there is not the least doubt what his answer will be. To most Indians the Army in India is an army of occupation, a foreign garrison maintained at the cost of India in order to perpetuate her political subjection to Great Britain. This being so, Indians do not take very seriously the assurances of Government spokesmen about the disinterested purpose of the army, and some of them even go so far in their scepticism as to treat the usual pleas about external aggression and internal troubles as wholly a pretence. Those who hold this view are not at all convinced that the danger to India from the neighbouring powers and border tribes is real, and consequently they find no occasion for surprise if the Government shows an unwillingness to transfer to Indian control an army whose real purpose, as they say, is to suppress the nationalist aspirations of the people of the country.

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This, however, is definitely an extreme standpoint and is not based on a correct and comprehensive appreciation of the military stakes involved. Though the Army in India is still the mailed fist behind the British civil administration, a very valuable factor of its political and financial credit and the final sanction of its authority, the holding of India against Indians in the present disarmed state of the country can no longer be regarded as an important military problem. There was indeed a time when the supression of any possible armed outbreaks on the part of the princes and the people of India was considered to be the principal function of the army. But this role has been obsolescent since the eighties of the last century. It was the Russian menace which pushed it into the background and the steady growth of this danger till the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 induced Lord Kitchener to give to internal security a wholly secondary place in his scheme of reorganization.

Only once between the days of Lord Roberts and the present time did the question of internal security seem to be on the way to regain some of its old importance. This happened between 1912 and 1914 and was due to the fears created by the Swadeshi movement. In 1912 a committee was appointed to report on the strength of the armed forces to be maintained in India. This committee submitted its report the next year and, among other things, expressed the opinion that Lord Kitchener had been too optimistic about the domestic situation in India in relegating internal security to a position of minor importance. It consequently proposed that the strength of the troops assigned to this duty should be increased.

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This view was evidently shared by the Government of India, for, when the war broke out, it starved the expeditionary forces sent out of India of their reinforcements for fear of possible complications within the country. This led to the disaster in Mesopotamia, which, in its turn, brought about a complete revolution in the outlook of the Indian military authorities. After the war another committee went afresh into the question of the military requirements of India and assigned to the army functions at once more balanced and more consistents with the strategic demands of the hour.

Under these new principles, the needs of internal security have not been forgotten but they have not been allowed to overshadow or interfere with the other functions of the army. This is perfectly in accord with the latest doctrines of imperial military organization. Unlike the armies of great continental powers, which are meant to provide against a definite military contingency, the armed forces of the British Empire have to be suited to a wide range of circumstances, varying from a world war to a small expedition against an uncivilized tribe or police duties in a city street. Their organization, therefore, is extremely flexible, and, though readily capable of modification and expansion, is suited to average rather than exceptional circumstances. Exactly the same principles have been followed in the post-war reorganization of the Army in India. It is at once a reserve police force, a garrison and a field army, and its war organization has been so devised that it can provide for external defence, border policing and internal security in their due order of importance without any overlapping or clash of duties.

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This does not, however, mean that all that British military and civil authorities say about the function of the army is necessarily true. The most important fact about the Army in India is not that it is intended against Indians to the exclusion of defence against external aggression and tribal raids but that, in every one of the functions assigned to it, it is more concerned with British than Indian interests and is thus a considerable addition to the natural defensive requirements of India. Naturally, British writers do not admit this. They argue that the task of defending India is unique and without parallel in the rest of the British Empire, and in support of this opinion point to the immense land frontier of India, to the semi-civilized and warlike tribes living all along it, to the past invasions of India through the north-western passes, to the exposed coast-line, and, last of all, to the racial and religious feuds of the innumerable communities of India. Most of these difficulties are, however, either exaggerated or inapplicable to present-day conditions. Nothing more than a passable familiarity with the problem is necessary to show that the task of defending India has been made materially heavier and more complex under the existing political regime than what it would have been had India been a free country or a Dominion of the British Empire. It is exactly this difference introduced by the British connection which constitutes the injustice of the military burden of India and it can certainly be challenged by Indians as an imperial and not a national liability.

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Natural Defensive Requirements of India

We must now try to find out what this difference amounts to in actual practice and in order to do so make a comparison between the natural military requirements of India and those created by the British connection.

The conditions under which every country must be defended are set by three important facts: first, its geographical situation; secondly, its economic needs and political aspirations; and thirdly, its relations with foreign powers as influenced by the two previous considerations. In every one of these respects, India may be considered to hold a peculiarly favourable position. She is, in spite of tendentious assertions to the contrary, one of the best naturally protected countries of the world. Well-defined barriers separate her from her neighbours, and for the most part these are impassable. The military authorities themselves recognize the strength of India's natural defences by considering the whole land frontier from Gilgit to Siam absolutely safe from the military point of view, and by not providing a single battalion of the Regular, Auxiliary or Territorial forces for holding it, with the exception of an unimportant detachment at Gyantse in Tibet, which, however, is stationed there for a wholly different purpose.

In addition, India is insulated from the great Asiatic powers by a wide belt of difficult, sparsely populated and barren country, comprising the deserts of eastern Persia, western Baluchistan and south-western Afghanistan, the mountainous and bleak regions of Sinkiang and Tibet, and the jungles of northern Burma, Indo-China and Siam. The whole of this area is so lacking in natural resources

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and means of communication and so extreme in climate that the passage of large bodies of men with modern equipments of war over it would present insuperable difficulties. Even the most modern and powerful aeroplanes would not be able to cross into India over this belt owing to the distance and the atmospheric conditions created by the high altitude, and if one or two specialized machines succeeded in reaching the fringe of the country, they would either be brought down or be utterly incapable of inflicting any material damage.

One has only to compare these conditions with the indeterminate frontiers, with whole countries within air range of one another, between France and Germany, Germany and Poland, Poland and Soviet Russia, Soviet Russia and Manchoukuo, which are nevertheless held against highly organized potential enemies, in order to realize the military advantages possessed by India. Yet this is not the whole of the matter. Just as India is a well-marked geographical unit she can also be a self-contained economic and political unit. Unlike Great Britain, whose prosperity and even existence depend on world-wide commerce and free transport of food from the farthest ends of the earth, India is economically self-sufficient and well able to provide for the material needs of all her population. This self-sufficiency is in fact so complete that even in the present unindustrialized state of the country, a stringent blockade would make no difference to the people of India except a certain lowering of the standard of living. With the country industrially vivified like Soviet Russia they would be in almost an impregnable position.

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The military and political need of India is, therefore, to leave and be left well alone, and for this purpose her defensive forces should be just sufficient to act as a deterrent on foreign powers and to destroy in detail any invading army that may reach the borders of India. This last, however, is not likely to be a normal contingency as the difficulty of attacking India by land is too great and the bases from which a naval expedition adequate to conquer India could be sent out are too far away. Besides, the natural political and economic development of all her Asiatic neighbours is in no way affected by India. None of them have any direct point of friction with her which could induce them to seek war, and unless we ourselves excited their cupidity by a culpable display of military weakness they would probably all be perfectly ready to leave us alone.

Three Special Problems

The definition just given of the basic military requirements of India leaves out of account three considerations on which official apologists lay special emphasis. These are the questions of India's relations with Afghanistan and the Pathan tribes and the possibility of an invasion of India through the north-western passes. As regards the last, which figures most in popular imagination, it is often stated that as India has been invaded more than once in the past by warlike peoples from Central Asia, the same thing might be repeated in our days. This, however, is wholly an imaginary fear. It does not require a very profound knowledge of history to discover that a modern irruption of barbarian hordes into India is no longer a practical possibility. The Scythian, Hun,

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Turki, Mongol and Tartar invasions of India were caused not by any circumstances on this side of the Hindu Kush, but by ethnological disturbances in the Central Asiatic steppes. The wars of nomadic peoples living in those regions led to the overflow of barbarous and semi-barbarous hordes into the adjoining areas of Russia, China and Persia as well as India. All these countries had to suffer equally from these incursions, and if an exodus of nomadic tribes, such as had taken place in the past, were again to be feared, the countries which would suffer most from them are as likely to be Soviet Russia, China and Persia as India. Yet no one even thinks of putting such a possibility before the General Staffs of these countries and even in India it is never met with except in writings intended for popular propaganda.

The question of Afghanistan and Pathan tribes is of greater practical importance, though even here there has been a good deal of mere specious reasoning. Looked at from a purely defensive point of view, the problem of resisting Afghan aggression is not very difficult. Just as the settling down and civilizing of the nomadic tribes of Turkestan and he expansion of Russia have dried up the very source, so to say, of all widespread ethnographic disturbances in Central Asia, the same historical process has destroyed Afghanistan's importance as a corrídor of these invasions. If Afghanistan were to attack India now, it would have to do so with its own solitary strength, and neither its man-power nor its economic resources are such as to make this a real danger to a unified India.

In actual fact, however, it may safely be assumed that Afghanistan has no intention of making

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an unprovoked attack on India and that this part of the defensive arrangement of India need be nothing more than the normal routine of frontier defence. The same remark applies to the Pathan tribes living in the unadministered territories of the North-West Frontier Province. It is customary to speak about the love of independence and warlike habits of these tribes. Yet their military potentialities are not very high in spite of the advantage given to them by the nature of the ground. Their number is limited to some hundreds of thousands—the population of one of the larger Indian districts. They are armed only with the rifle, swords and knives. Their supply of ammunition and arms is extremely precarious. They have no artillery and cannot use the automatic weapons which at times fall into their hands. So, what they are really interested in is not a trial of strength with the heavily-armed and highly-organized standing army of India, but plundering raids to which the poverty of their country and the atmosphere of robbery and blood feud drive them. The problem of the frontier tribes is thus a local and restricted problem of policing, civilizing and educating. British frontier officials themselves recognize this and try to provide employment for the tribesmen by undertaking road-building. If yet they cannot always look upon the problem as one of local importance, it is not due to anything inherent in the Indian situation but to the international rivalries and enmities arising out of Great Britain's position in world politics.

External Defence Under British Rule

The most important of these factors which complicate the task of India's external defence is the presence

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beyond the Oxus of Russia, whom the ruling class of Great Britain regard as the arch-enemy of the British Empire. The rivalry of Russia and England in world politics is one of the great motive forces of nineteenth century diplomatic history, and, strange as it may seem, it has been inherited by the Bolshevists from the Czarist regime. It remained quiescent for ten years, from 1907 to 1917, under the greater threat of German ambitions. But with the rise of the Bolshevists to power it has regained all its old sharpness. This should not, however, be taken to mean that Russia intends to invade India through Afghanistan. As far back as 1907, General Palitsin, the Chief of the Staff of the Russian army, assured the British Military Attache in St. Petersburgh that the idea of a Russian invasion of India had never been seriously entertained by responsible Russians. This opinion is probably shared by the Chiefs of the Soviet army also. But that does not prevent Soviet statesmen, as it did not prevent their Czarist predecessors, from making a full use of the threat to create trouble in Afghanistan in order to extort concessions from Great Britain in other matters and spheres.

On the other side, British soldiers and statesmen are also not too eager to avoid at all costs any occasion for conflict with Soviet Russia. A large majority of the officers of the British army, navy and air force, who naturally give shape to the military policy and plans of the Empire, belongs to the extreme anti-Soviet section of the British people. It was the politicians and soldiers of this section who supported with men, money and munitions the risings of the White Russian

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leaders against the revolutionary order, and should a similar opportunity offer in the future, they would not be unwilling to adopt the same course. The more thoughtful military thinkers certainly realize that to attack Russia at the fringes would be like striking the air. Nevertheless, the policy of tearing away outlying parts of the Soviet Union, like Ukraine, the Caucasus, Turkestan and eastern Siberia, has been put forward in British journals representing serious Service opinion. It is quite likely that there are among the British officers of the Indian army many who hold these views. These officers would not be sorry to strike a blow at the Soviets at the only place where the frontiers of Russia and the British Empire come within striking distance of one another.

It is this mutual hostility of Great Britain and Russia which makes Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier of India the object of so much watchful attention on the part of the British military authorities. Looking upon this region, as they do, as the cockpit of a possible Anglo-Russian struggle, they cannot feel disinterested about its affairs, and the Afghans and the Pathans too, fully conscious of the dangers and uncertainties of their position as a buffer between two great powers, show more restiveness than they would have done if they had been left to themselves.

The second factor, which complicates the external defence of India, is the decision of the military authorities, on account of political considerations, not to give battle to the major enemy within the boundaries of the country. This leads them to place their main line of defence well beyond the present limits of India and to

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seek zones of political and military influence in western Baluchistan, Seistan, Afghanistan, Sinkiang, Tibet and Yunnan. Throughout this wide stretch of territory British agents are busy consolidating their influence and in order to make their efforts successfull, the Army in India has to be strong enough to give this policy an effective backing of force.

This fundamentally offensive intent of the Army in India is very well illustrated in the case of Afghanistan. The real explanation of the anxiety of the military authorities about its intentions is not the fear of a sudden Afghan attack on India but the vital necessity of seizing the Kabul-Kandahar line with the least possible delay. For this purpose the frontier between Afghanistan and India has been so fixed and is so administered that all the lines of advance into Afghanistan are fully controlled by the British authorities. This would make co-operation with the Afghan forces easy if Afghanistan is friendly. But should it be hostile, that too would make no difference. The Field Army of India has been made sufficiently strong to hold the Kabul-Kandahar line against the combined hostility of the Afghans and Pathans on both sides of the Durand line.

पं० इन्द्र विद्या वाचस्पति प्रदत्त संग्रह

Internal Security Under British Rule

While the external defence of India has only been made more complex by the wider interests of the British Empire, the internal security duties of the army in their existing character may be said to be entirely a product of the British connection. Official reports and pronouncements give a wholly disinterested version of

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these duties and generally assume that they solely comprise the prevention of Hindu-Moslem riots. As a military writer says, "Hindu-Moslem communal disorder, arising from the lack of a mutually tolerant attitude towards one another's religious rites and customs, is so frequent and of so serious a nature that troops are required on many occasions to come to the assistance of the police in quelling or preventing riots." There is also an extremely eloquent passage in the first volume of the Simon's Commission's report in which this argument is more fully developed. Yet a closer analysis of facts does not support this view and on the contrary shows that the internal security duties of the army are far more comprehensive than the simple preservation of law and order.

In the first place, the strength of the troops assigned to internal security is materially out of proportion to the number actually called out in aid of the Civil Power in any given year. Under the existing arrangements the strength of the internal security troops in India is about 70,000, or nearly equal to the strength of the Field Army, which is the major striking force at the disposal of the Government of India. The significance of this fact will be better appreciated if it is remembered that this force is tied down to internal security in addition to the Auxiliary Force, the Indian State troops, the civil police, the ordinary armed police and the special armed police trained on military lines like the Eastern Frontier Rifles, the Assam Rifles, the Burma Military Police and the Frontier Constabulary, the function of all of which is to preserve

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peace within the country. Besides, there has been more than one case of serious internal disorder to suppress which no troops were availed of.

Secondly, the internal security troops have as a normal part of their equipment arms for which no conceivable internal disturbance can furnish any opportunity. This of course is not admitted by the authorities. Nevertheless there is good reason to believe that some field artillery has been allotted to the internal security troops and that it is so distributed that even after the full mobilization and departure to the theatre of operations of the Field Army, a sufficient number of sections with the necessary establishment will be left behind in India to make the internal security troops a fairly efficient fighting instrument of all Arms.

Thirdly, the proportion of British troops is far higher among these troops than in the Field Army. While in the whole of the latter there are only 12 British infantry battallions to 36 Indian, among the internal security troops the proportion is 28 British batallions to 27 Indian. If it is said that this is necessary in the interest of impartiality in communal disputes, the absence of British troops in the serious Hindu-Moslem riots at Dacca, Kishoreganj, Beldanga and Chittagong in Bengal seems to be inexplicable. Even in the Hindu-Moslem disturbance of 1926 in Calcutta, the British infantry in Fort William was called out only in the first few days and after that its place was taken by the Gurkhas of the Eastern Frontier Rifles. Thus, the communal situation does not seem to furnish a sufficient explana-

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tion of why almost two-thirds of the British infantry in India, which is the most expensive element in the army, should be employed on a minor military task.

Last of all comes the fact that the duties in respect of internal security allotted to the army authorities are of a distinctly military character. The Army Regulations make a clear distinction between the internal security duties of the army and duties in aid of the Civil Power. The military commanders in India have no responsibility for maintaining law and order unless specifically summoned to do so by the civil authorities. But they are entrusted with a definite military duty in connection with internal security. Under the existing regulations every General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in India and every District Commander is responsible for the internal security of the areas under their command, while the Operations Branch of the General Staff at the Army Headquarters prepares internal security schemes for the whole of India. This can only mean that the matter is approached as a problem of strategy and not of policing.

All these facts point to the conclusion that the internal security troops constitute the British garrison of India, whose purpose is to defend British interests in the country in the face of any opposition that, on a very liberal and even imaginative calculation, it may be considered to lie in the power of the Indian people to offer, even if the rest of the army were absent from India or occupied with a different task. This is, in fact, substantially admitted by the military authorities who, for their own use, sum up the internal security duties of the army as follows:

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1. The suppression of revolutionary movements, both violent and non-violent, organised and designed to upset the established Government.
2. The protection of railway communications in war against sabotage by ill-disposed persons.
3. The suppression of rioting or other forms of lawlessness arising from local or widespread grievances.
4. The prevention of communal disturbances of a racial, religious or political character, not directed against Government but which Government must suppress.

The second of these duties is particularly illuminating as a key to the real meaning of internal security, though the rest also, with one exception, are closely connected with the continuation of British rule in India. The provision of troops for the protection of railways shows that in times of war the military authorities will treat the people of the country as potential enemies and deal with the interior as a line of communication area. It is needless to say that such a contingency could never arise if the Government and the army of the country had been national. In this, as in almost all its aspects, internal security really stands for the security of the British domination.

Overseas Liability of the Army

The last of the imperial obligations of the Army in India is the liability for service overseas. Even in pre-war days it used to be taken for granted that the Army in India would have to furnish troops for imperial service if British interests were

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threatened in any part of the East. Accordingly, small contingents of Indian troops always formed part of British expeditionary forces operating in China, Malay, East Africa or Persia whenever they could conveniently do so. But the change which has come over the fundamental conception underlying the organization of the Army in India after the war is more revolutionary. While the old Indian army was an autonomous force with a more or less autonomous strategic role, the army of today is an integral part of the system of imperial defence. Its share in the wider task is no longer confined to the possibility of having to send out a few units to reinforce some outlying post of the Empire, should occasion require and permit it. Its whole organization is now based on the assumption that it is the eastern counterpart of the British Army and performs in its own sphere duties identical with those assigned by imperial strategy to that army.

This change of outlook is due to the results of the War. It was during the Great War of 1914-18 that the Army in India was first employed for imperial purposes on a major operation of modern warfare. It went into this war utterly unprepared. Not only was an attempt at preliminary staff work on a scheme of imperial corporation severely frowned upon and checked at the very outset but the Indian Army, meant as it was for frontier campaigns and maintenance of internal security, was defective in organization, training and equipment to fight against European enemies. The result was a series of deplorable breakdowns culminating in the mismanagement of the Mesopotamia campaign, which was investigated by a Royal Commission. The

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verdict of this Commission was that the disaster was due not so much to the fault of this or that person as to the doctrine which assigned too local a role to the army. This lesson was taken to heart by the Indian military authorities and formed the keystone of the post-war reorganization.

The second important factor in the revolution is the change brought about in the strategic requirements of the British Empire by the war. On account of its scattered character and the world-wide commercial interests of Britain herself the task of defending the Empire has been divided into two halves of local and imperial defence. In accordance with this division, each constituent part of the Empire is primarily responsible for its own local defence, while the greater burden of imperial defence, comprising the maintenance of naval supremacy, safeguarding of naval bases and imperial communications, provision of expeditionary forces and the protection of the general interests of the Empire, falls on Great Britain. Though this burden was additional to that of defending the Home country against possible attacks by continental neighbours, Great Britain, with her own navy and army, could look to both without serious risk so long as the greatest naval and military danger to the British Empire was located in the North Sea and the Franco-Belgian frontier. But the War, by destroying the German menace and creating new military political and economic forces throughout the world, has fundamentally disturbed this strategic centre of gravity. In view of the new conditions brought about by the re-awakening of China, the lapse of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, the aggressiveness of

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Japan in the Far East, the growth of America's power in the Pacific and the exposed situation of New Zealand and Australia, both of which are incapable of defending themselves without external aid against a great power, Great Britain finds today that not only does she require greater mobility for her military, naval and air forces throughout the Empire but that the position of her navy and army is no longer central enough to enable her to give equal protection to her interests in all parts of the world. What she now requires is, therefore, a more even distribution of her striking power between the East and the West, and it is with this object that she has built a battleship base at Singapore. In the military sphere the same policy has led to the re-equipment of the Army in India on modern lines and the permanent earmarking of a part of it as an expeditionary force.

Here it will probably be objected that the Dominion armies have also been brought into line in organization, equipment and tactical training with the British Army and that, if India is to be a part of the British Empire, her participation in imperial defence is only natural. But this, though partially correct, would not be the whole truth as it overlooks the full autonomy of the Dominions in matters of defence. It has been expressly recognized as a result of the discussions in successive Imperial Conferences that the nature and extent of any action to be taken by the Dominions in connection with local or imperial defence are to be decided by their Parliaments on the recommendation of their Governments. As a matter of fact, by a well-established constitutional convention, a Dominion may or may not join any of

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Great Britain's wars according as its interests are affected. A declaration of war by Great Britain against a foreign power will, of course, involve all the Dominions in a state of juridical belligerency. But whether they will actively take part in the hostilities or only remain passively belligerent will depend entirely on their own choice. This right of free co-operation does not belong to India. Her armed forces will be drawn upon in every war in which Great Britain may be engaged as a matter of course and without any reference to her interests. It is this fact which reduces the function of the Indian Army to that of a detachment of the British Army and makes it, as the official definition has it, only "the Army in India."

III. MAN POWER.

Recruitment for the Indian Army.

The function and the moral characteristics of an army are so closely related that no one should be surprised if an army, meant for the highly varied duties just outlined, is composed of steady professional fighting men who would not be easily swayed by political influence, or if the officers who are responsible for organizing it confine recruitment only to the classes best suited to their needs. This, however, has never been admitted by the Army authorities. They not only deny that the enlistment policy followed in India has anything to do with ulterior motives, but, on the contrary, declare that it has been forced on them by the unequal military capacities of the Indian people. This is the well-known theory of the martial races of India, according to which only a small number of Indian tribes and castes provide good

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fighting meterial while the vast majority of the population is utterly unfit to bear arms. All British military officers and administrators in India unreservedly accept this theory. It is with its help that they explain the one-sided composition of the Indian Army, and they firmly maintain that it cannot be thrown open to all Indians without totally destroying its efficiency.

This, if true, would be a most serious matter for India, as there can be no nationalization of the defence of the country without an equal apportionment of the burden of defence over the whole population. But it need not be taken too literally. The theory of the martial races, in the form in which it is usually held and stated, is so extreme, full of contradictions and biologically improbable that it carries its own refutation within itself. And what is more important still, it has exercised very little influence on the actual policy of recruitment. If the composition of the Indian Army were dependent on the inherent military virtues of certain sections of the Indian people, one should have expected it to remain constant througout its history or, at any rate, to change gradually in response to the natural rise and fall in the military capacity of the different classes. This, however, has never happened in actual fact. The transformations in the Indian Army have always been abrupt and the result of a deliberately adopted policy. They have all been brought about by a definite Government order and the most important and far-reaching of these changes in recruiting policy had no connection whatever with the question of efficiency.

This revolutionary event in the history of the Indian Army, surpassing every other in its consequences, was the

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Mutiny, which at one stroke destroyed the old Sepoy army and created in its place a Punjabized force almost identical with the Army of to-day. Before 1857 each of the three Presidency Armies, which had conquered India for the East India Company and grown up in the three centres from which British domination spread over the rest of the country, obtained their men from their natural areas of recruitment, namely, the Madras Army from the Tamil and Telugu country, the Bombay Army from Western India, and the Bengal Army from Bihar and the U. P. To these armies the areas which now supply the greatest number of soldiers sent very few recruits or none at all, and there was practical exclusion in them of all the well-known classes now enlisted in the Army. More surprisingly still, in the most important of them, the Bengal Army, a Government order specifically restricted the enlistment of Punjabis above a negligible proportion, and this ban continued till the rebellion of the Hindustani Sepoys automatically opened the ranks to them.

The gaps created in the Bengal Army by the Mutiny were at once filled up by the Sikhs and other Punjabis and hill-men who were eager for an opportunity for revenge. All these people had been conquered by the British with the help of the Hindustani soldiers and in their ignorance regarded these, rather than the handful of British, as their real enemies. This enmity was fully exploited by the authorities in suppressing the Mutiny. When the news of the enlistment of the Gurkhas reached Lord Dalhousie in England, he wrote that "against Oude sepoys they may confidently be expected to fight like devils " and some time after, General Mansfield, the

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Chief of the Staff of the Indian Army, also stated that "it was not because they loved us but because they hated Hindustan and hated the Bengal Army that the Sikhs had flocked to our standard instead of seeking the opportunity to strike again for their freedom."

The Mutiny made the enrolment of new classes in the Indian Army a matter of necessity. But this was considered no reason for continuing the policy without re-examining it in all its bearings. Accordingly, as soon as normal conditions were restored, a Royal Commission was appointed to go into the question thoroughly and report "whether there were any races, tribes or castes hitherto neglected, from which recruits might with advantage be drawn for the infantry of the Bengal Army." The recommendation of this Commission was that "the Native Indian Army should be composed of different nationalities and castes and, as a rule, mixed promiscuously through each regiment," and the grounds on which it was based were wholly political. As Sir John Lawrence, then Chief Commissioner of the Punjab and afterwards Viceroy of India, wrote, among the defects of the pre-Mutiny army "unquestionably the worst, and the one which operated most fatally against us, was the brotherhood or homogeny of the Bengal Army; and for this particular defect the remedy is counterpoise—firstly, the great counterpoise of Europeans and, secondly, that of various native races." It was in accordance with the policy here indicated that the recruitment of the Indian Army was formally extended to the Sikhs, Punjabi Mussalmans, Pathans, Gujars, Jats, Rajputana

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Rajputs and others, though they were recognized to be "comparatively little-worked fields."

The subsequent changes in the class composition of the Indian Army do not even nearly approach this revolution in importance, and were due more to accidental reasons and the natural inclination of a foreign administration to take the line of least resistance than vital military necessity. One of the most important of these considerations, which induced the military authorities to favour the men of the north, was that, by 1880, the Afghan frontier had become the principal theatre of operations for the army. This fact not only made it more convenient for the authorities, who were more concerned with their immediate needs than the possible reactions of their policy on the man-power of the country, to recruit the army from classes which were near at hand and familiar with the terrain but also attracted to the northern army the keenest officers who were best fitted to bring out the latent qualities of their men. On account of greater opportunities for seeing field service, the most ambitious and promising officers of the Indian army strained every nerve to be posted to the Bengal Staff Corps. This damped the spirit of the Bombay and Madras Armies and did not a little to bring the men of the south under an undeserved suspicion of inferiority.

There are also indications that the enlistment of even the so-called martial classes of the north has been influenced by political considerations. Of this a very good example is furnished by the Pathans, though others are also not rare. Originally introduced as a counterpoise to the Sikhs, the Pathans had come

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to hold a very important place in the army by 1879, when some isolated and insignificant incidents of the Second Afghan War somewhat marred their credit. During a flanking movement which Lord Roberts was executing by night, two Afridi privates of the 29th Punjab Infantry suddenly fired two shots, whether accidentally or intentionally, to warn their kinsmen was never settled beyond doubt. In course of the same campaign there was some desertion among the Pathan soldiers, who disliked service against their own people. As a result, a Government order issued in 1882 restricted Afridi enlistment to certain specified regiments. This continued for some years during which there was no extended Pathan recruitment. The cloud was not lifted till the frontier operations of 1897, in which the Afridi sepoys of the Khyber Rifles held their posts with desperate gallantry against their own kith and kin without having British officers to encourage them and when overpowered by sheer numbers made their way to the nearest British garrison. But this spell of good name was not to last long. The Great War and the frontier operations of 1919 again revealed the political instability of the Pathans. So, in the postwar reorganization of the army all the clans of the Afridis were excluded from it with the exception of two. And even these two have recently been eliminated as a result of the troubles of 1930.*

* An exception to this rule is made in the case of Adam Khel Afridis, a small number of whom are enlisted in the 2nd and the training battalion of the 14th Punjab Regiment. Recently a promise has also been made to revive Afridi recruitment gradually, provided the clans show by their conduct that they deserve it.

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The Indian Tradition

Though the actual changes in the composition of the Indian army have not primarily depended on considerations of fighting quality, it should not be denied that, as things stand to-day, the military potentialities of all sections of the Indian people are not equal in every respect. This inequality is in a very large measure the product of British rule but part of it is also due to certain inherent features of Indian society. It was the presence of these features which furnished British policy with its starting point and but for them the single fact of foreign domination would not have exerted the influence it really has had. Therefore, the first thing necessary for an understanding of the effects of British rule is a correct idea of the Indian military tradition in pre-British days This will give the standard for a comparison between the original shortcomings of the Indian people and the modifications and aggravations brought about by subsequent practice. Without this comparison there can be no fixing of responsibility for the existing inequalities and, what is of greater practical importance, no discovery of the means by which they may be levelled up.

Now, the most striking feature of Indian military life, which comes out of an enquiry into the past, is the caste or tribal character of military service. If a political genius had risen in India in the middle of the eighteenth century and tried to create a national army he would have found that Indian society presented a very uneven texture when considered as military material. Not only was fighting the business of a number of professional bands and groups but these bands and groups were

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also mostly hereditary. The military life of the nation was governed by two principles: the principle of specialization and the principle of heredity, which taken together prevented the growth of a tradition of universal military service.

Yet the military vocation was more widely practised in India then than it is now. This was so not only because there were greater opportunities for a new military community to arise under the stress of special circumstances but also because the existing martial classes did not belong to any one caste or to any one particular region. We learn from Kautilya's *Arthasastra* that even in ancient India soldiers were recruited from all the castes,—Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya or Sudra, as well as from the innumerable wild and predatory tribes which were only loosely affiliated to the caste system, and as late as 1879 the British Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab reminded the Government of India that "the fighting castes are to be found all over India." Thus, every part of India had its special military classes, and though these were differentiated from the rest of the population by their greater military efficiency, there did not exist that want of balance between region and region which forms a feature of the military life of to-day.

The origins of the specialization of the military, as of most vocations in India, are lost in antiquity. But one of the most important contributory factors has certainly been the low political development of the country, as a result of which the State and the people were never considered to be synonymous terms in India. In Indian society the social, economic and religious

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life of the people have always pursued their course apart from the doings of the State, and, therefore, wars and campaigns came to be regarded wholly as the business of chiefs and kings and of the professionals who chose to cast their lot with them. The traders and peasants followed their vocations in peace while kings fought kings for thrones and territories and the defeat of the one or the other only meant for the masses a difference in the person of the revenue-taker. Accordingly, war never came to be looked upon as a condition of national existence in India nor was there any approximation between the man-power and the military power of the community.

This state of affairs has also its parallel in other countries. Even in Europe fighting was the business of professionals and did not touch the life of the masses before the French Revolutionary and the Nepoleonic wars created the tradition of national service, and there too soldiers came from specialized racial groups, though of course the hereditary principle was not carried to anything like its extremes as in India. In the middle ages fighting was the normal occupation of almost a hereditary caste, the knights, and the tradition continued well into the modern age. The first standing armies of Europe were composed almost exclusively of the well-known martial classes of Europe. The backbone of the army of Francis I of France were the Swiss. The most important element in the army of Henry VIII of England was a contingent of Germans, the famous Landsknechts of Swabia, who were also the mainstay of the army of Emperor Maximilian of Germany. In the English army it was this body

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of Germans who marched immediately before and behind the king, and this practice of enlisting foreign mercenaries continued throughout the sixteenth century and even into the eighteenth.

Thus it will be seen that the evolution of the military profession, though not certainly of the science of war, had proceeded in almost parallel line in Europe and India down to the eighteenth century. This analogy becomes closer still when one considers the new tendencies which were making themselves felt in both the continents. As in Europe, in India also, in course of the eighteenth century, the tradition of specialization and caste was breaking down before the impact of new forces. This new development manifested itself in two contradictory tendencies in India, the first of which was the creation of purely professional and mercenary soldiers through the dissolution of the tribal military organizations, while the second tended to unite the tribes and clans under a wider loyalty than mere professionalism.

The seat of the first of these developments was the territory still under the weak Mogal Court whose internal dissensions and intrigues were fostering the mercinary spirit of the soldiers who took service with one pretender or rebellious governor after another. The second, on the contrary, was most apparent in the revolted territories where a militant Hinduism was in full swing. This revival of Hindu power was creating vigorous military States in the Punjab and the Deccan. The army of Sivaji and the later Maratha chiefs was the nearest approach to a national army ever seen in India. The Sikh power was also no less

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well-knit, and closely resembling these two in spirit and organization were the military power of the Jats and of the Bundela Rajputs. All these communities had a profound effect on the martial spirit of the Indian people. They tended to take the tradition of military service from a clannish or professional, to a broader national or religious ground, and there is no doubt that under their influence a tradition of national service would have grown up in India. But before that could happen, they were shattered in a struggle with the newly-established foreign power, who, finding in these military communities their most dangerous enemies, broke them with the help of other Indians and finally employed their fragments as its own professional soldiers.

The Effects of British Policy.

Still this is not the only way in which the necessities of British rule have interfered with the natural military development of India. Throughout its history, the recruitment policy followed by the army authorities in India has never been economical of the man-power of the country. It should be remembered that the established British practice of maintaining a small, highly-trained professional army instead of a short-term conscripted army as in most European countries, restricts the needs of the Indian army to a fraction of the total population of the country and thus involves a serious disability for the greater majority of able-bodied Indians even if it had been equally and proportionately drawn from all parts of India. But, as has already been indicated, this is not done

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in India. The Indian military authorities have never been fair to the man-power placed at their disposal. In their policy of combining political safety with miliary efficiency they have shifted the field of recruitment from area to area and denied the right of serving their country to millions of Indians who have forfeited their confidence or roused their suspícions. This process of picking and choosing has, at times, been carried out so irresponsibly and without regard for the effect it was likely to produce on the manhood of the country that its only parallel is to be found in the methods of primitive agriculturists who clear out a jungle area and sow it with crops in one year and as soon as the harvests are gathered, they abandon the depleted soil and move on to exploit a fresh area. No country in the world can indefinitely submit to this drain without permanent injury to its resources. That India has been able to withstand it to the extent she has and is still able to provide a sufficient number of men for the army of her rulers is due wholly to her almost unlimited human resources.

The two features of this irresponsible use of the man-power of the country which might be singled out for mention are the hardening of the caste tradition and the alteration of the distribution of the fighting castes. The ressons for which the military authorities find it necessary to harden the caste tradition in India are inherent in the very nature of the British rule. Owing to its special character they cannot invoke the sentiment of national service in their favour and have to rely more and more on the hereditary fighting tradition of a caste to sustain the morale of their

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soldiers and save the army from turning into a dangerous mob of mercenaries. Therefore, they always exaggerate the value of inherited characteristics and encourage the prejudices and exclusiveness of every caste. This not only narrows down the military capacity of the Indian people but makes the principle of hereditary service more inelastic and rigid than ever.

A further narrowing down of the military capacity of Indian people has been brought about by the alternations in the distribution of the fighting castes. It has already been pointed out that the so-called martial classes were to be found all over India. But now they are said to exist in certain parts of the country only. In bringing about this shrinkage of the field of recruitment, the army authorities have put many well-known fighting castes in certain areas outside the pale of recognition and at the same time created others in different areas. The fighting Brahmins of the U. P. and the Punjabi Mussalmans are perhaps the two best examples of this in opposite ways. The military qualities of the Brahmins have been highly praised by even so staunch a believer in the theory of the martial races as General Sir George MacMunn. During the Great War they furnished 20,382 recruits to the Indian army. Not a single man of this caste is now to be found in the ranks, while the Punjabi Mussalmans, who had no very ancient tradition of fighting behind them but are yet well-known for their steadfastness and freedom from religious and political fanaticism, now form the most numerous single class in the army.

Not less important has been the indirect effect of British recruitment policy on the man-power of India. The

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army authorities often complain that the human resources of India are extremely limited and that even the fighting castes must be carefully used if they are not to become over-recruited and exhausted. This is perfectly true from their own point of view but it is due more to the character of British rule than to any factor inherent in Indian society. This point has already been referred to in course of this discussion, but as it has not been fully explained, it is worth-while to look into it in a little more detail.

The military energy of every nation proceeds, broadly speaking, from two psychological sources, derived from two simple biological instincts, the instinct of pugnacity and the instinct of defence. In origin closely interwoven and complementary to one another, these two instincts have, in course of social evolution, each of them acquired special associations of its own. The purely pugnacious instinct has combined with the spirit of adventure and love of physical prowess, sport and fighting for fighting's sake to form the psychological basis of the ideal professional soldier, while the instinct of defence has been broadened and strengthened by the addition to the motive of defending one's life and property of the idea of defending personal and national freedom, personal and national individuality, national culture, national religion and national honour. To a certain extent, of course, both these groups of attributes are to be found intermingled in a more or less varying proportion in every soldier. But generally speaking they go to form two clearly distinguishable types of armies, which for the sake of expressiveness may be called the 'Condottiere' and the 'Burgher' types.

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The armies of most modern States and those which fought the Great War are of the second type. Though national citizen armies were not wholly absent in previous ages, their general vogue may be said to be a result of the French Revolution. Threatened by the finest professional armies of Europe, the men of '92 and '93 substituted patriotism for professionalism and proclaimed the idea that the defence of the motherland and all that it stood for in the field of cultural, moral and spiritual achievement was the concern of the people. The result was an amazing liberation of the latent military energies of the nation and the defeat, at the hands of more or less untrained levies, of the army of Frederic the Great. The example of France has since been followed by every modern nation and the present-day tendency is to regard the armies of all States rather as the symbol of the will to live as a nation and civilization than as an assemblage of its professional fighting elements.

This distinction between professional and citizen armies is of particular importance for India on account of the unaggressive character of the Indian military tradition. The Indian fighter is at his best when fighting for a cause. The whole history of India is full of instances of inoffensive and quiet tribes turned into fierce warriors by an attack on their religion, liberties or honour. It was religious persecution of a very bitter kind which created three of the most famous fighting communities of India,—the Sikhs, the Marathas and the Jats, and rekindled the military spirit of the Rajputs. The great Hindu epics of Ramayan and the Mahabharata are both glorifications of a righteous war.

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The Muhammadans of India also, and particularly those of the Punjab, share this unaggressive outlook.

It is owing to this fact that intelligent Indians find it more and more difficult to enlist in an army which will not satisfy their highest yearning for service. Even the ordinary peasant from whom the army is recruited sees no ostensible object except money for which he should enlist in it. Neither his homestead, nor his religion, nor again his *izzat* is threatened, and he naturally looks upon the military profession as upon any other profession. So, when the bond of hereditary tradition which still inclines him to the vocation of soldiering is weakened he judges it from the point of view of economic gain alone. The difficulty in recruiting due to this cause was so widely experienced during the war that the Delhi War Conference of 1918 passed a resolution calling for special measures to enlighten the people of India about the essentially patriotic character of the war. But neither this propaganda nor subsequent talk about the necessity of defence has convinced the Indian people about the national character of the army. It is to them, as it intrinsically is and was bound to be, an army of pure professionals.

Demartialization of India.

The decline in the military capacity of the people of India has been due not only to the effects of the special method of recruitment but to general policy as well. Naturally, this cannot be openly avowed by the Government. But there was a time when British soldiers and administrators were not as reticent as they are to-day. So we find Sir Richard Temple, the Governor of Bombay,

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writing in 1879 that "in India, under British rule, the former martial tendencies of the Native population gradually become lessened till they almost disappear, and this circumstance is considered to be one of the safeguards of our rule. So conscious has the Government been of this that within the present generation the Native population has been generally 'disarmed', that is, the people have been enjoined to give up their arms."

This disarmoment has been brought about by two means. In the first place the army has been kept as distinct from the general population as possible and, secondly, the latter have been deprived of the right to carry arms by an Arms Act. Both these steps are directly opposed to the practice of Governments which have a stake in the man-power of their countries. So far from encouraging any glaring inequality between the efficiency of the army and the general military capacity of the nation, all modern States deliberately maintain the closest contact between them, so that in case of need the peace time armies might be rapidly expanded by drawing upon all the available man-power of the country. One of the most important reasons for this is the financial impossibility of maintaining in peace an army equal to all the demands of war. So, it is laid down in the military manuals of all modern nations that "to develop morale in the people as a whole is an essential part of the policy of the nation."

It is in accordance with this policy that in countries like Great Britain, where the voluntary system prevails, it is the custom to give a large portion of the civil population a short-term training in a second line army

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like the Territorial Army, while in the countries, which have conscription but cannot absorb all the available man-power in the regular army, care is taken that no portion of the eligible quota is wasted through thoughtless rejection. Thus, in Soviet Russia where the regular army tekes an annual maximum of 270,000 men only out of available total of about 850,000, the superfluous personnel is given training in the Territorial Army or the Militia.

In addition to this, all modern countries possess a wide system of preparatory military training in schools and colleges as well as outside them with a view to developing young men physically and morally for defence, whether or no they actually enter military service. In France this training begins at the age of 17 and is given by athletic clubs and educational institutions. In Russia it begins at the age of 19 and continues for two years. The O.T.C. fulfils a similar requirement for Great Britain, while, in the United States, the R.O.T.C. is making strenuous nnd extensive efforts through schools and colleges to give elementary military training to the entire youth of the nation. The object of all these measures, as has already been mentioned, is not to train soldiers for the regular army but only to keep a sufficient pool of men ready to supply its needs in case of emergency. In India army organization proceeds on radically opposite lines. Here, the interests of the military authorities are not so much to bridge the gulf between the people and the army as to widen it. *

* A significant exception is made in the case of the adult male British Civilian population in India, almost the whole of which receive intensive military training in the Auxiliary Force.

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Therefore, what they do is to maintain the army and its reservoirs almost like a game preserve and then so treat the military potentialities of the rest of the nation that they naturally come down to the lowest possible level. The Arms Act, whose operation is watched by the General Staff, is the most powerful lever in the accomplishment of this policy, and it is helped by the persistent disregard by the Government of proposals to extend preliminary military training to schools and expand and develope the Territorial Force.

Physical Deterioration of the People

The cumulative effect of all these factors has been so far-reaching that the future organizers of a national army must begin not by immediately throwing open the first-line army to indiscriminate recruitment but by carrying through a plan for the recovery of the man-power of India. Nevertheless, there is no reason to look upon these difficulties as beyond the efforts of a resolute and public-spirited administration to overcome, though naturally there would be a great difference in this respect between a people's government and the government by a foreign nation. An alien government has every inducement to take things as they are and build the army from the material ready to hand than shape the material to its needs. No national government in the world can, however, follow this course. It is not in India alone that the military efficiency of a people is subject to ebbs and flows. The Italian army of to-day is not what it was in the years immediately after the war, nor can the power of the Soviet and Turkish armies of to-day be compared with the power of these armies under the previous regimes. The fact is no country in the

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world can, or, for that matter, does adopt a policy of *laissez faire* with regard to its military capacity. Just as price of freedom is said to be eternal vigilance, military capacity which is the fundamental basis of this freedom is not also maintained without constant vigilance. Until this watchful care has taken the place of haphazard, if not the deliberately injurious, methods now followed, all talk about the military inefficiency of the Indian people must be considered to be entirely hypothetical.

Yet even after the recovery of the military spirit of the people, the makers of the national army will have to face a very serious problem, the problem of bringing to the same general plane the physical efficiency of the entire population of India. This inequality in the physical development of the Indian people affects other occupations as well as military service and is due, above all, to their poverty and in a lesser degree to ignorance and bad dietetic habits It has become a commonplace to say that the greater majority of the Indian people live on an allowance of food wholly inadequate to sustain a man in the ordinary occupations of life, and this insufficiency becomes almost painfully apparent when compared to the dietary allownce of an Indian soldier.

This contrast was referred to in course of the investigation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, when Lord Linlithgow, the Chairman, asked the Public Health Commissioner to the Government of India whether the effect of diet on the physical development of the Indian people could not be ascertained from the observation of men of the same stock in ordinary life and under better conditions of

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nourishment afforded by the army. To this question, Lietenant-Colonel Graham replied that the scientific side of the question had not been looked at at all in the army. But, though no general investigation had been carried out, Lt.-Colonel Graham might have replied to the query from the facts observed in particular cases. The Dogras, for example, exhibit a rather poor physique when they are enlisted in their native hills. But after enlistment the higher standard of feeding quickly develops them, and there is nc doubt that an improvement in the standard of living of the Indian peasant and a raising of his economic status will go a long way towards improving his physique.

This, however, cannot be brought about by mere private effort. The physical deterioration of the masses as well as the intelligentsia in India is the result of such a vicious circle of poverty, ignorance and, in some cases, baneful habits of living and unsuitable diet that it can hardly be remedied without extensive State enterprise. This is exactly what is extremely problematical in India. For one thing, the public health departments of the central and provincial governments in India have not the status and importance of, say, the Ministry of Health in Great Britain. And, then, there is no effort to introduce better dietary and living conditions, initiated and supported by researches into the problem of nutrition. Such things are done as a matter of course by all civilized governments in every part of the world. In Japan, for instance, an Imperial Institute for Nutrition was established by a Special Ordinance of 1920 and foundations were laid for alterations in the national diet which appeared necessary from the point

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of view of physical development. In India such investigations into the subject as are being carried out at present are wholly disproportionate to the magnitude of the problem.

But depressing as the situation in certain respects is, there is no reason to be unduly pessimistic about it. There are also other countries in the world where physical deterioration has become a disquieting phenomenon and is being counteracted by special measures. In Great Britain, particularly, the poor quality of the recruits who present themselves for enlistment is causing a good deal of concern to the army authorities. This deterioration is not simply the result of the economic un-settlement of the post-war years but has been observable since the first decade of this century, when it led to the formation of a Physical Deterioration Committee. It became particularly conspicuous during the war in comparison with the superior development of the Dominion soldier and has continued since.

IV. COMMAND AND CONTROL

Transfer to Indian Control

In all recent discussions about the subject, the question of Indian control of the army has either been confused with the question of Indian leadership or made dependent on it. Hence it has been taken more or less for granted that until a sufficient number of Indian officers had been trained to make the command of the army preponderantly Indian, there could be no transfer of the portfolio of defence to an Indian minister. This, however, is wholly a wrong assumption and an

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unnecessary mixing up of issues which have nothing to do with one another. It is of course true that the full nationalization of the army will not be accomplished until both its command and control have been made Indian. The presence of Indian officers in the higher commands and staff appointments would also be an undoubted advantage to an Indian minister. But with all this, the duties to be performed in each sphere are so well-marked that there is no need to make the first change contingent on the second...unless of course British officers refuse to help and co-operate with their Indian colleagues as they help and co-operate with their civilian colleagues in England.

Nowhere in the world and still less in Great Britain is professional knowledge considered to be an indispensable qualification for a minister of war. This would certainly have been necessary if the function of a war minister were to direct military operations or even to look to army organization in its executive aspect. But he performs none of these duties, which are very properly left to his expert colleagues. All that he has to do is to decide broad questions of policy with the help of his advisers and serve as a link between the military machine and the civil government. For this purpose an open mind combined with a knowledge of the general requirements of defence is more important than a specialist's mastery of technical details.

It is for this reason that ministers of war in Great Britain have rarely been professionals, and two of the very greatest of them, Cardwell and Haldane, were politicians who knew nothing about war and army organization when they were appointed to their office.

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These examples are not the only ones of their kind. It is noteworthy that the Committee, on the basis of whose work Haldane carried out his reforms, was presided over not by one of the distinguished soldiers of the day, among whom were Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener and Lord Wolseley, but by Viscount Esher who had left the army early in life and become known almost wholly as a politician. Another instance of an officer who turned to political work comparatively early and was appointed to one of the most important posts connected with defence, is Sir Maurice Hankey, who as Secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence knew as much about imperial strategy as any expert. The record of Mr. Winston Churchill as First lord of the Admiralty before the war should also not be forgotten in this connection, while it should be remembered that the War Cabinet of Mr. Lloyd George which took strategical as well as political decisions was composed of the Prime Minister himself, Lord Curzon, Lord Milner and Mr. Henderson, all civilians.

What is perhaps really surprising is not that some civilians should have taken as distinguished a part in military organization and conduct of war as any soldier or sailor, but that some of the most far-reaching innovations in organization, equipment and strategy should have been due to the initiative of politicians. Of this fact, the achievements of Cardwell and Haldane, both of whom carried through important reforms in the teeth of the opposition of their military advisers, are the classical examples. They show that any fundamental reform in army organization is more likely to come from outside, from a clear-sighted and militarily

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minded political chief than from a soldier immersed in tradition.

This superiority in adaptability, imagination and foresight is even more marked in the field of technical invention. The tank and the Stokes trench mortar were two of the most decisive inventions of the war. They were both ridiculed and opposed in orthodox military quarters. This discouragement had so decisive an effect that both the inventions were neglected and on the point of being abandoned. But it was at this juncture that Mr. Churchill intervened in the one case and Mr. Lloyed George in the other. Through their efforts the new weapons were imposed on the sceptical and unwilling authorities and had a perceptible effect on the duration of the war.

In fact, the claim of the civilian to control defence in its hightest sphere and to collaborate in it in his own right and in the interest of efficiency is so universally recognized that it requires no emphasizing. This recognition has found a witty expression in the saying that modern war has become too complex a business to be left to soldiers and is endorsed more soberly in the Field Service Regulations which lay down that the strength of the armed forces to be maintained for the defence of the Empire is a matter of policy for which His Majesty's Governments throughout the Empire are responsible. It is in accordance with this principle that the final decision in all matters connected with defence is left to the Civil Governments of the Empire and, what is not less important, civilíans preside over and collaborate in the army Council and Committee of Imperial Defence in Great Britain and the Councils

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of defence in the Dominians, all of which are responsible for strategy and technical preparations for war.

It is this civilian collaboration in the military sphere that is wanted in India, and for this nothig more is required than a sence of defence and a *flair* for the general principles of strategy and army organization. There is no harm in admitting that this sence is not as highly developed in the politically conscious classes in India as it is among those in Europe. But the reason for this is not any lack of basic aptitude as inexperience. The way to familiarise the people and the politicians of India with the reality of defence questions is not to exclude them from all contact with military affairs but bring them into closer relations with the problems of national security. This can only be done through the increasing association of Indians with the actual defensive arrangements of the country, if not at first in an executive, at least in a consultative capacity. As a matter of fact, most thoughtful Indians would not consider it unreasonable at all if a short probationary period were interposed between the present exclusion of Indians from the field of defence and their full participation in it. It was with this object that the British Indian Delegation before the Joint Parliamentary Committee suggested the creation of something like an Indian Committee of Imperial Defence. This proposal, if accepted, would certainly have familiarized Indians with the problems of defence and secured their co-operation in army affairs. But it produced no definite response from the Joint Parliamentary Committee. It was perhaps too conscious of the authoritative and important, though nominally

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advisory functions performed by the Committee of Imperial Defence in England to recommend the creation of such a body in India. At the same time it could not reject so reasonable a proposal. So what it did was to describe the question wholly as one for settlement between the Government of India and the legislature.

Defence in the New Constitution

It is very unlikely that the authorities in India will invite the co-operation of the Indians even in a consultative capacity and to a greater extent than is necessary to give an appearance of popular support to their policy on account of the complete freedom from legislative control with which they have been invested in the new constitution. One of the principles adopted in this constitution is that "in the sphere of defence the Governor- General's responsibility will remain undivided and unimpaired and the Department of Defence will be under his exclusive direction and control." This refers to his responsibility to the Indian and not the British people, as he will be fully answerable for the administration of the department to the Secretary of State for India and through him ultimately to Parliament. This principle of undivided responsibility will find expression through the following arrangements:

First, the Department of Defence will be administered directly by a Counsellor under the supervision and control of the Governor-General.

Secondly, in order to avoid responsibility in any form to the popular legislature and popular ministers in respect of expenditure on defence, Military Finance and the Military Accounts Department, which are now subordinate to the Finance Department of the Government

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of India and to the Army Department, will be transferred to the Defence Department. As a necessary consequence of this arrangement the pay and pensions of the defence personnel would not be submitted to the vote of the legislature.

Thirdly, the Governor-General will have powers to coerce any department on the ministerial, *i. e.*, popular and responsible side, if anything done by it should conflict with the policy of the Defence Department.

Fourthly, the Governor-General will possess the same powers in regard to provincial governments, and should anything done in the provincial sphere conflict with the policy of the Defence Department, the views of the Governor-General must prevail and he will be given adequate means of giving effect to them.

It will thus be seen that the powers of the Governor General will be absolutely untrammelled in the field of defence. In order to qualify them in some measure, the British Indian Delegation before the Joint Parliamentary Committee suggested that the Governor General's Counsellor in charge of the Department of Defence should always be a non-official Indian and preferably an elected member of the legislature or a representative of one of the States; that the control now exercised by the Finance Member and the Finance Department should be continued; and that all questions relating to army policy and the annual military budget should be considered by the entire ministry, including both Ministers and Counsellors, in the case of a difference between whom the views of the Governor-General will prevail. All these suggestions have been rejected on the ground that they conflict with the principle of Governor-General's unqualified responsibility.

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The most important omission in the arguments on which this rejection is based are that they fail to state what purpose this unqualified responsibility is intended to serve, as responsibility simply for responsibility's sake cannot be regarded as a principle. From the Indian point of view, the special responsibility of the Governor-General in regard to defence can only be admitted if it is in India's interest, if it is exercised only because Indians are not ready just at this moment to take over the Department of Defence, and, above all, if there is provided at the same time the necessary machinery for the natural transfer of the responsibility at the end of the transitional or probationary period. The provisions of the new constitution satisfy none of these requirements. They provide for an autocracy on the reserved side at the centre which will be untempered even by the limited degree of influence over policy now exercised by the Indian members of the Governor-General's Council, and thus are a definite retrogression on the state of affairs as they are at present.

The Army As An Imperial Force

Though the object of keeping the Governor-General's reponsibility unimpaired in matters of defence has never been officially avowed, it is not difficult to find in it the necessity for preserving the imperial character of the Indian forces. Just as the British Empire is an empire without an imperial government, it is also an empire without a formally-constituted imperial army. But there are degrees of cohesion among its widely scattered and more or less autonomous forces which make them variably dependable for imperial use. Thus, the Dominion armies, which are meant for local defence, form an independent group and cannot be used for any other purpose without

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the consent of their Governments, while the British Army in Great Britain and the forces in the Crown Colonies, dependencies and mandated territories stand closely together under the direct and indirect control of the War Office and form an imperial force. In this scheme of relations, the position of the Indian army is with the second group. In spite of its theoretical autonomy, the powers exercised over it by the Government of India have never been more than what must necessarily be delegated to a local agent managing its affairs at a considerable distance from the central authority. Thus, the Army in India has always been closely, though indirectly, controlled by the imperial military authorities, who can use it for any purpose they think fit with due regard for military contingencies but without any fear of constitutional checks.

This control is maintained, first of all, by giving no voice to the Indian people in matters of defence and, secondly, by making the Government of India responsible to Parliament and the British Government. While the Dominions have complete control over their foreign policy and defence arrangements and are in no way bound by the decisions of the British Cabinet, the India Government is constitutionally subject to the latter's authority, and the Secretary of State for India is the channel through whom this authority is exercised. Therefore, in contrast to the practice in the case of the Dominions, whose co-operation in imperial defence is secured through consultation with the respective Councils of Defence and representation on the Committee of Imperial Defence, all important questions connected with the defence of India have to be submitted to the British Government, whose

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technical department naturally examines and approves of or rejects them. It does not matter if this control is called that of the Secretary of State rather than of the War Office. The control of the British Government over India, being collective and the Secretary of State being no expert in matters concerned with defence, he has of necessity to submit it for opinion and decision to the experts, and thus the final agency which controls the defence of India both legally and actually, though indirectly, are the imperial military authorities.

Besides, these authorities have two other direct means of keeping in touch with the Army in India. The first of these is the right given to the Commander-in-Chief and the principal Staff Officers in India to correspond direct with the War Office on questions relating to intelligence, training, preparation for war, and other matters not requiring the decision of the Government of India and the supply of military information required by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. There is no doubt that this is one of the most important channels through which the Imperial General Staff influences army affairs in India, and though theoretically this right to correspond directly does not extend to important questions involving principle or policy or expenditure, which are dealt with by the Army Department in correspondence with the Secretary of State for India, it is hardly possible to keep the communications in watertight compartments in practice.

The second important instrument of the influence of the imperial military authorities are the British officers who command and staff the Army in India. In the Dominions, the co-ordination of the strategy, tactics and training of

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the armies with the doctrine laid down by the Imperial General Staff is secured by the exchange of officers in the two services, and their common training in the newly-established Imperial Defence College. But the command in India and Great Britain is practically identical. Whether they belong technically to the British or the Indian service, the British officers of Indian army are the local agents of the Imperial General Staff in all matters connected with military policy and organization. They keep themselves in close touch with the plans and ideas of that body and do not acknowledge any duty to the national defensive requirements of India.

Present Stage of Indianization.

There is no doubt that the imperial stakes in the Army in India would have stood as effectively in the way of giving commissions to Indians as they have stood in the way of transferring political control, had not both the British and India Governments been irrevocably committed to it by their political pledges. Accordingly, the opposition of the Imperial and Indian military authorities in this field has taken the form of confining the transformation within as narrow limits as possible, making it slow and difficult, and treating it as an experiment. It is on account of this opposition that British statesmen have never been able to give any undertaking about the pace of Indianization, nor even to admit the principle that the entire Indian army will be commanded by Indians at some future time.

This was seen very clearly in the discussions of the Sub-Committee No. VII, dealing with defence, of the first Round Table Conference. The discussions in it

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centered mainly round the question of Indianization and soon led to a clear difference of opinion. "The majority of the Sub-Committee considered it impossible for practical reasons to lay down any defiinite rate of Indianization or anything of a precise character that might in any way embarrass those responsible for defence and fetter the judgment or the discretion of the military authorities," while the minority "was in favour of a strong affirmation to the effect that the complete Indianization of the officers of the Indian army should take place within a specified period." The cleavage between the two sections being thus fundamental, it was decided to incorporate the views of both in the report and a resolution was passed recommending, among other things, a substantial increase in the rate of Indianization and the establishment of a military college in India.

It will thus be seen that with the exception of the decision about the military college, the resolution of the Defence Sub-Committee contained nothing definite and left the whole matter to the military authorities. This liberty of action was fully exercised by them in promulgating their scheme of Indianization a few months later, under which a division of the Indian army was to be Indianized and the annual in-take of officers in the military college in India was fixed at sixty. This is the scheme which is now being worked out. It was adopted after a full consultation between the Government of India and the military authorities, both British and Indian, and represents the extreme limit of concession to which the latter were prepared to go. This deliberate character of the scheme has again been

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emphasized recently, and for this reason its scope and limitations deserve to be analysed a little more fully.

The first important feature of the scheme is that for the first time in the history of the post-Mutiny army, it seeks to creat a formation of all arms composed entirely of Indians. As the Commander-in-chief explained to the Indian Military College Committee of 1931, the object of the scheme was "to create a recognized combatant force on a purely Indian basis, which would in time replace a force of a similar size in the Imperial army." It should be recognized that this was a definite advance on any scheme of Indianization previously formulated but at the same time the decision to confine Indianization to a particular formation continues the principle of segregating Indian officers in one place, which was one of the most unpopular features of Lord Rawlinson's Eight Units Scheme. Military authorities object to the term segregation and explain that the restriction of Indianization within a definite field is unavoidable on account of the experimental character of the change. This may be partly true, but there is no doubt that it is also due in some measure to racial prejudice. Ever since the inception of the idea of giving a responsible position to Indians in the army, more than fifty years ago, one of the greatest obstacles in the way of realizing it was frankly recognized to be what Lord Kitchener described as "the deep-seated racial repugnance to any step which brings nearer the day when Englishmen in the army may have to take orders from Indians." This was put more bluntly by Lord Rawlinson after the war, when he wrote that old officers in England were frightened by the talk of Indianization and had

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begun to say that "they won't send their sons out to serve under natives." He, therefore, suggested a way out by confining Indianization to certain units of the army, a solution which was also suggested by Sir George Chesney in 1868 and Lord Morley in 1907. This was the underlying motive of the Eight Units Scheme, and there is no reason to assume that the prejudice which was responsible for it has died out since.

The second feature of the scheme is its extreme slowness and caution. In spite of their decision to confine Indianization to one division, the military authorities could have made the transformation within those limits much quicker by adopting a higher figure for the output from the military college. But as the Commander-in-Chief said, he was "quite unable to advise Government to experiment with a larger number of units than this will mean, until such time as we can see a little more clearly whether an army officered by Indians is going to be a fighting proposition. This opinion, he repeated again, when he told the Council of State in last September that "it was impossible to think that any responsible Government would be moved from their well-considered policy before the first fruits had time to prove themselves."

The third feature of the existing scheme is what looks like an attempt to give the Indianized portion of the army an inferior status by giving the new Indian officers a lower rate of pay and restricted powers of command. Now, as regards the rate of pay, theoretically speaking, there is no reason why a lower scale based upon a less expensive education and more commensurate with the financial resources of the country concerned

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should carry with it any suggestion of inferiority. But in practice its effects are certain to be so, particularly as the new officers are being trained to and will in fact adopt the English standard of living. As an acute observer of English social life has remarked, every Englishman, who strives after social recognition, displays a luxurious standard of dress, diet, travelling, amusements and personal services, whether he can afford it or no, and the very first thing a social upstart thinks of doing in England is to show by an affectation of luxury that he wants to be classed as a gentleman. To deny the means of indulging in these luxuries on an equal, though admittedly irrational scale, to an Indian would be to draw upon him the condescension, if not actually the contempt, of his English colleagues.

The distinction in respect of powers of command is even more serious. Under the latest amendments to the Indian Army Act, the Indian commissioned officers will not automatically have the same powers of command over the personnel of the British Army in India as are possessed by British officers, but it will be left by regulations to the commanders to appoint the occasions on which Indian officers may exercise these powers. This special provision would involve a serious limitation on the Indian officer's status and usefulness even when the divisional scheme has been fully worked out, and in the existing state of affairs his position would be still worse.

At present all the formations, i. e., divisions, brigades etc., in India are composed both of British and Indian troops. The stations and areas also have an assemblage of soldiers, both British and Indian. Any officer

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who is fitted by his rank to do so can now command these formations, stations and areas irrespective of the fact whether they contain Indian or British troops. But under the new rules the Indian officer will not be entitled to command by virtue of his rank alone and without special executive sanction, any formation, station or area, which contains British troops. This is a serious curtailment of the powers of the Indian officer, and under the stress of war when it may not be practicable always to group Indian and British troops in exclusive formations, the handicap is bound to be still worse.

Thus the programme of Indianization which is now being worked out falls decidedly short of a satisfactory standard, though it is an improvement in some respects on previous schemes. Yet, its obvious drawbacks may in the long run prove to be less serious than its distant implications. It is quite possible that the origin and features of the scheme are due to the simple desire of the military authorities to make the transfer of command as slow and difficult as they can make it. But the full consideration with which it was introduced, the deliberateness with which a distinct status is being conferred on the Indian officers and the unwillingness which the authorities show to extend Indianization beyond a division—all suggest that it might also be part of a clearly-conceived design. The soldiers and statesmen who direct imperial military policy are too far-sighted to count on the exclusion for all time of Indians from the defence of their country, which is yet so necessary for maintaining the imperial character of the Indian army. They may, therefore, have hit upon a solution of the difficulty by dividing the army in India

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into two parts, one to be composed of and commanded by Indians and employed for local defence, and the other, composed of both Indian and British troops and commanded wholly by British officers, to be reserved for imperial purposes, so that if at some future date the political control of defence has to be transferred to Indians it might be confined to the field of local defence and not disturb imperial defensive arrangements. It is certain that the recent decision of the British Government to make a contribution towards the cost of the Army in India was taken with some such end in view and to reinforce the claim for British control over the army on financial in addition to other grounds. The acceptance of this contribution has been one of the signal blunders in Indian politics in recent years and has materially prejudiced the case for Indianization.

Supply of Officers

The latest argument against quickening the pace of Indianization is that there is a lack of candidates of the right stamp even for the limited number of annual vacancies now offered. The Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun has now been in existence for something like four years. The first batch of Indian officers trained by it passed our of the College in December, 1934. As a result of the experience gained during this period, the military authorities say that they are not getting a sufficient number of candidates of the suitable type and that a large proportion of the aspirants who come before the Record and Interview Board are absolutely unsuited either to be officers or lead men.

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This, at first sight, is a very startling conclusion, as the annual contingent for the college has been fixed only at sixty. But it should not be dismissed as unfounded or insincere. The creation of an officer class is everywhere and at all times a long and arduous process, and the only way to succeed in it is to set about it on right lines.

Lord Haldane says that before the war it was difficult enough to recruit the limited number of officers then required sor the small British army and that during his term of office as Secretary of State for War every source had been tried by the able administrative Generals working with him and found wanting. Contrasting this state of affairs with the conditions in France and Germany, he writes:

> "To raise a great corps of officers who have voluntarily selected the career of an officer as an exclusive and absorbing profession has been possible in Germany and France. But it has only become possible there after generations of effort and pressure of a long-standing tradition, extending from decade to decade, under which a nation, armed for the defence of its land frontiers, has expended money and its spirit in creating such an officer caste."

Since then, as a result of the war, the handicap on numbers has largely been removed. But even now, if we are to believe Sir Philip Chetwode, the British officers, as a class, are not of the highest type in general education, military instinct and leadership. He says, he was horrified at the number of British officers

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in India who had allowed themselves to sink into a state of complete brain slackness. Their narrow interests were bounded by the morning parade, the game they happened to play, and purely local and unimportant matters. There were officers all over India who scarcely read the newspapers and were quite unaware of the larger aspect of what was going on in India around them and still less of the stupendous events outside this country which were in process of forming an entirely new world. There were many officers, he further adds, who could not express themselves clearly in the simplest language, let alone with any style or distinction. *

If conditions are like this among the British people with their long tradition of public, military and naval service and a school and university life particularly adapted to develop the capacity for team work, the difficulties in the first stages of Indianization should not be looked upon as exceptional. Still, they would have been far less serious if the military authorities had not quite unnecessarily narrowed down the field of supply by the adoption of a wholly unsuitable system of training and test of suitability. The first condition of success of any system of military education is that it should be suited to the national character and not try to uproot the cadets from their social environment. This, however, is exactly what the military authorities are attempting in India. They are not only trying to inculcate the best moral qualities of British officers in their Indian replicas but are also imposing upon the

* These opinions were expressed by Sir Philip Chetwode in an address given at the Staff College, Quetta, early in 1935.

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latter the English mode of living and social behaviour. This is due to the fact that their notion of the best type of officer is derived from public school ideals, which set almost as much value on the English traits of self-restraint, reticence, fair-play and strong will as on a code of good form limited to pure externals. But it is exactly this code of good form which seems trivial to the more serious Indian temperament, rather inclined to seek a conscious idealistic satisfaction in every effort and activity. Therefore, whenever they try to adopt this code of good form they lose some of their robustness and become both self-conscious and finical.

The bearing of this fact on the supply of candidates to the military college, when taken together with the high cost of education at Dehra Dun and the complicated method of selection, should be clear to all. Though it might be possible to find in India a fair number of young men who approximate the British type in character and outlook, the number of those who satisfy this test and have in addition the requisite economic status, familiarity with spoken English and the English mode of living, and contacts in Government circles, must necessarily be very few. Hence, in practice, the standard set by the military authorities favours candidates of the class which possesses all the external qualifications. This is the urbane, anglicized and well-to-do upper middle-class of India, which from its long association with Government is most familiar with the technique of job securing, but who for this very reason is not likely to produce the best type of officer. There is no doubt that this class is in many respects the most intelligent, supple and refined in India.

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Nevertheless, its long monopoly of State employment has made it value official careers more for their security prestige and handsome emoluments than opportunities for service, while its mode of living has not only somewhat devitalized it, but made it a stranger to the people. It must be the over-representation of candidates of this class which leads the military authorities to complain about the absence of the natural leaders of the country among the candidates for commissions.

The second check on the supply of candidates to the military college is the want of the necessary background. Everyone who has tried to familiarize himself with the problems of military education knows that it does not consist simply of training a small number of cadets in a specialized college. It has a far wider national background. Therefore, all the nations of the West recognize three stages in the education of officers: the first or preliminary education which is imparted through the general educational system of the country and intended only to develop physique and character; the second or graduating stage which is given at one or more military college expressly designed to provide officers for the army; and the third or the post-graduate stage which is highly specialized and professional, and is given at Staff Colleges and elsewhere.

There is, besides, an intimate relation between the army and the universities in all western countries. In Great Britain, for example,—the universities are recognized as sources from which a supply of officers may be drawn not only for the Regular Army and the Royal Air Force, but for the Reserve of Officers and for the Territorial Army as well. In the years immediately

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preceding the war, Cambridge, to take only one instance, contributed a large number of candidates for commissions in the Army, and a system of military instruction was organized there under the direction of a Board of Military Studies, in direct communication with the War Office. The system was re-established after the war under the auspices of the War Office and the Air Ministry. It is the intention of the Army Council to increase the number of candidates for commissions from the universities, and new regulations have possibly been issued by them by this time. The army and the universities in England are also brought closer together by the fact that military and naval officers often join the universities for post-graduate courses. None of these auxiliary devices exist in India.

It is not very surprising, therefore, that the supply of candidates for the military college should be somewhat limited, and confronted with what looks like a drying up of the military energy of India in the highest sphere, the military authorities adopt the same principle as they did in the case of the common soldier. They appeal to hereditary aptitudes and want the natural leaders of the country, the sons of sardars and big zamindars, to come forward for commissions. But here again they commit two mistakes, the first of which is to suppose that all the big zamindars are the natural leaders of the country. Precisely this mistake was committed by the early British administrators in Bengal when, on the analogy of the great land-owning families of Great Britain, they took the revenue farmers of the Mogul administration to be the real owners of land and leaders of society and tried to impose the ideal of *noblesse oblige* on them by

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converting them into zamindars through the Permanent Settlement. The second mistake of the military authorities is to suppose that such sardars, zamindars and princely families as can claim to be the hereditary leaders of the people would take service with them without regard to the historical development which has intervened in the meanwhile. Sir Philip Chetwode has expressed surprise that the princely and noble families and the sardars in the Indian States do not think it good enough to send their sons to serve in the Indian army and has not been able to discover any reason for it. The reason, however, is given very clearly by Kaye in his analysis of the Sepoy army:

> "The founders of the native army", he writes, "had conceived the idea of a force recruited from among the people of the country and commanded for the most part by men of their own race, but of higher social position—men, in a word, of the master-class accustomed to exact obedience from their inferiors. But it was the inevitable tendency of our increasing power in India to oust the native functionary from his seat, or lift him from his saddle so that the White man might fix himself there ....
>
> "So it happened, in due course, that the native officers, who had exercised real military authority in their battalions, who had enjoyed opportunities of personal distinction, who had felt honourable pride in their position, were pushed aside by an incursion of English gentlemen, who took all substantive

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power into their hands, and left scarcely more than the shadow of a rank to the men whom they had supplanted. An English subaltern was appointed to every company, and the native officers then began to collapse into something little better than name.

"As the degradation of the native officer was thus accomplished, the whole character of the Sipahi army was changed. It ceased to be a profession in which men of higher position, accustomed to command, might satisfy the aspirations and expend the energies of their lives. Thenceforth, therefore, we dug out materials of our army from the lower strata of society and the gentry of the land, seeking military service, carried their ambitions beyond the red line of the British frontier and offered their swords to the Princes of the Native States".

It is this historical process which must be reversed if there is to be a revival of the military capacity of the nation. In the higher sphere of command as in the lower sphere of man-power, the only way to create a truely national army is to wipe off the state the developments of the last hundred and fifty years and lay the foundations afresh.

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